The Government has adopted the principle of equitable burden sharing between the Government, the oil PSUs and consumers to protect the interests of common man, vulnerable sections of society and also the financial health of OMCs. In this context, the Government has made marginal increase in petrol and diesel prices by Rs. 2/litre and Re. 1 /litre respectively with effect from 15.2.2008 which is actually in the nature of a restoration of retail prices, to the price level operating before February, 2007. Despite the steep increases in international oil prices, the Government has not increased the prices of PDS Kerosene during the last six years and of Domestic LPG during the last three years.

The Government is closely monitoring the international oil prices and will continue to protect the interests of consumers.

Profit and turnover of public and private oil companies

t65. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that public and private sector oil companies in the country have earned net profit in the first nine months of the financial year 2007-08 ending December;

(b) if so, the break up of the amount of returns earned by each of the such companies during the said period; and

(c) the total turnover of each of these companies during this period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE I*N* THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) Private Oil Companies are not under the administrative control of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. The Profit After Tax and total turnover of the major Oil Public Sector Undertakings in the first nine months of the financial year 2007-08 are as under:

(Rs. in crore)

Name of the major Oil PSUs	Profit After Tax	Total Turnover
ONGC	14074.55	44408.92
IOCL	7377.00	177223.00
BPCL	1522.18	86211.02
HPCL	750.38	73901.00
GAIL	1879.00	13073.00
OIL	1342.06	4291.77

Shortage of LPG supply

†66. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: SHRI
ABU ASIM AZMI: PROF. ALKA
BALRAM KSHATRIYA: SHRI AMIR
ALAM KHAN:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is an acute shortage of supply of LPG cylinders in the country;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that black-market for the supply of LPG is on its top; and

(c) if so, the reasons for shortage of supply of LPG to the common man and what steps have been taken by Government to prevent the repetition of such shortage in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (c) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that at present, there is no overall shortage of LPG in the country and LPG supplies to distributors are being made by the OMCs through indigenous production and imports in accordance with the genuine demand of customers registered with the LPG distributors. OMCs have further reported that they have supplied 8450 TMT (Thousand Metric Tonnes) of domestic LPG in the country during the period — April, 2007-January, 2008 as against 8030 TMT during the corresponding period of last year, showing a growth of 5.2%.

However, OMCs had reported backlog in LPG supplies in certain States in the country due to reduction in supply of bulk LPG by Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) & Essar Oil Limited in January 2008, delay in movement of bulk LPG by rail from Jamnagar to the Northern Region, increased demand in the States due to severe cold which resulted in panic booking by the customers, strikes by contract labour, agitational activities, delays in berthing of vessels at Haldia Port due to reduced draft, bandhs etc.

Government has advised OMCs to liquidate the backlog in the States by operating the bottling plants on holidays and during extended hours. Increased bottling is also being done during the working days for early clearance of backlog.

(b) The possibility of black marketing of subsidized domestic LPG cylinders by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out due to the wide gap between the retail price of LPG for domestic use and the market price for commercial LPG.

In order to stop black marketing of LPG cylinders, the Government has enacted "Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000" and formulated "Marketing Discipline Guidelines, 2001" which provides for penal action against LPG distributors indulging in black marketing of LPG.

Whenever OMCs receive complaints, these are investigated and if the complaint is established, suitable action is taken against the LPG distributor(s) in accordance with the provisions of the MDG MDG provides for following action against the distributor:—

— Fine of Rs. 20,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 1 st offence.

— Fine of Rs. 50,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 2nd offence.

— Termination of the distributorship for 3rd offence.

In addition to the action taken by the OMCs, State Governments are empowered under the LPG (Regulation of Supply & Distribution) Order, 2000 promulgated under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to take action against black marketing of domestic LPG. Similarly, the Weights and Measures Departments of the States/UTs initiate legal action against those LPG distributors found supplying under-weight LPG cylinders. The State Governments have been alerted from time to time to take steps against the black-marketing of domestic cylinders for unauthorized usage.

Government have issued advertisements cautioning the public that use of domestic LPG for non-domestic purposes is illegal, dangerous and against national interest. Through these advertisements, cooperation of the general public has also been sought to report any irregularity/malpractice to the OMCs.

The officials of OMCs carry out random checks at distributors godowns, delivery points, as well as en-route to ensure that no pilferage takes place. The distributors of OMCs are under strict instructions to check the weight of cylinders at their godowns before delivery, and only cylinders with the specified weight are to be delivered to the customers. The distributors have also been instructed to ensure that the seals are verified & shown to the customers at the time of delivery. In case any under-weight cylinder is received by the customer, such cylinders are replaced with a fresh refill cylinder without any charges levied by the OMCs.

Adulteration of petroleum products by pump owners

67. SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the petrol pumps in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Delhi are running on contract basis;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that irregularity in measurement takes place in those petrol pumps where modern machines have not been installed and adulteration is made in the storage tank in connivance with the tanker drivers;

(c) if so, whether Government has formulated any action plan to prevent it; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) No, Sir. Only 2.7% of the total petrol pumps in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Delhi are running as Company Owned Company Operated (COCOs) on permanent/temporary basis. The operation of such COCOs is carried out through a Labour Contract Agreement.

(b) to (d) Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) undertake regular and surprise inspections of Retail Outlets and also take action under Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG) and Dealership Agreements against those indulging in adulteration and malpractices. MDG provide for termination of dealership in the first instance itself for serious malpractices like adulteration, tampering of seals, and unauthorized fittings/gears in dispensing units.

In spite of above, the possibility of adulteration of petrol/diesel by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out due to huge price difference between petrol/diesel and various adulterants available in the market and the easy miscibility of these products with petrol/ diesel.

In order to check adulteration, the Government has taken a number of additional initiatives *viz.,* Automation of Retail Outlets, Third party certification of Retail Outlets, Monitoring of movement of tank trucks through Global Positioning System (GPS), Use of Market in Kerosene, Revision of MDG etc.